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Activities of the Department of Public Information: strategic communications services

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 71/101 B, provides a summary of the key advances made by the Department of Public Information from September 2016 to February 2017 in promoting the work of the United Nations to the global audience through its strategic communications services.

As part of those services, one of the three subprogrammes of the Department, implemented by its Strategic Communications Division, the Department develops and implements strategies for communicating United Nations messages on priority issues. The Division also manages the Department's network of more than 60 field offices. As the secretariat for the United Nations Communications Group and its task forces, the Division seeks to strengthen the coordination of communications throughout the United Nations system.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 71/101 B, the General Assembly took note of the reports of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information, submitted for consideration by the Committee on Information at its thirty-eighth session, and requested the Secretary-General to continue to report to the Committee on the activities of the Department.

2. The General Assembly also called upon the Department to provide specific information on a number of its activities. The Bureau of the Committee advised the Department to present the information requested in three parts, in accordance with the three subprogrammes of the Department: strategic communications services, news services and outreach and knowledge services.

3. The present report covers the Department's thematic campaign activities and highlights its strategic approach. Section II contains a summary of the Department's communications campaigns on key issues and section III a discussion of the activities of the network of United Nations information centres, including their multilingual work.

4. Unless otherwise indicated, the report covers the activities of the Department from September 2016 to February 2017.

II. Communications campaigns

A. Social and economic development

5. As the first anniversary of the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals was marked, the Department led a United Nations system-wide umbrella campaign to promote implementation globally. Building partnerships with the advertising, mobile phone, entertainment and media industries, the Department reached new audiences with creative communications strategies and digital tools. In collaboration with the GSM Association, it developed a smartphone application, SDGs in Action, through which users can collectively support the achievement of the Goals. Since its launch in late September, the application has been downloaded some 40,000 times and will be made available in five additional languages in 2017.

6. During the seventy-first session of the General Assembly, the Department, in collaboration with the Office of the President of the General Assembly and the PVBLIC Foundation, hosted a media zone to engage with the global online community on the Goals. The Department contributed substantially to the week-long programme, providing content and assisting in editorial planning. Goal advocates, senior United Nations officials, celebrities and other partners participated in interviews and dialogues, which were all streamed live on United Nations Television.

7. In a significant new strategic partnership, the world's six biggest communications companies — Dentsu, Havas, Interpublic Group, Omnicom Group, Publicis Groupe and WPP — have agreed to work with the Department to raise awareness of the Goals by developing global communications campaigns under the "Common Ground" initiative.

8. Key to global outreach on the Goals, United Nations information centres and information offices around the world undertook a wide range of promotional activities with local partners. Among them were the following:

(a) The United Nations system in Senegal, with the United Nations Information Centre in Dakar, branded a bus with the Goals icons to celebrate United Nations Day. That and another 20 buses toured Dakar and its suburbs for a fortnight in October to promote the Goals. A young Senegalese rapper contributed a song about the Goals to the campaign;

(b) The United Nations Information Office in Minsk supported a national system-wide campaign entitled "Inclusive Belarus: leaving no one behind in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals", with activities ranging from exhibitions and round tables to talk shows and film screenings, with the participation of regional authorities, non-governmental organizations, educational institutions and the private sector;

(c) In September, the United Nations system in the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United Nations Information Centre in Tehran launched a countrywide public awareness campaign entitled "Together for the Sustainable Development Goals", involving Iranian celebrities, through social media and the display of large billboards with Goal messages in Persian at the central railway station, in collaboration with the municipal authorities, reaching millions of people;

(d) On United Nations Day, the United Nations Information Office in Tbilisi unveiled, in the city centre, an art installation of a Rubik's cube that featured the Goals to help viewers to visualize the impact of the Goals and the many ways in which they intersect;

(e) In September, the United Nations Information Centre in Tokyo supported a fashion show at which 17 of the top models in Japan stressed the importance of the Goals to some 31,000 guests and more than 1 million online viewers.

9. Departmental support for United Nations conferences relating to Goal themes resulted in wide outreach globally. The Department sent a multilingual team to the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, held in Quito from 17 to 20 October, to assist with press conferences, media outreach, content generation and coverage on the ground on all United Nations social media platforms. The United Nations Information Centre in Bogota, which also serves Ecuador, provided communications support to the United Nations country team for the event and organized a workshop on the New Urban Agenda and the Goals for indigenous communities, as well as a session on learning the Goals in partnership with LEGO. More than 2,000 students participated in the events.

10. Several information centres organized activities at the beginning of 2017 to promote the New Urban Agenda. They included radio and television programmes, the production of videos and branded promotional materials, panel discussions, media and youth outreach and social media campaigns.

11. The Department developed and disseminated a communications package to all information centres to promote the Global Conference on Sustainable Transport, held in Ashgabat on 26 and 27 November, and a 20-member team provided on-site coverage of the event to amplify the media impact.

12. The Department also sent a multilingual team to the eleventh edition of the Internet Governance Forum, held in Jalisco, Mexico, from 6 to 9 December, to produce daily photographs, videos and digital cards for distribution to the United Nations system and on the Goals social media accounts and website. A live interview with the Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development was broadcast on the United Nations Facebook account, reaching more than 100,000 people.

13. The Department provided assistance at the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Cancun, Mexico, from 4 to 17 December, by producing daily stories, videos and images that were distributed on all social media platforms. Live social media coverage was done on a daily basis and two live broadcasts reached more than 200,000 people.

14. The issue of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls was highlighted through many initiatives. The Department supported the launch of the first university parity report under the IMPACT 10x10x10 initiative, part of the HeForShe campaign, and created media opportunities around the high-level partnership event organized by the Every Woman, Every Child initiative. It also assisted the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) in the organizations of events to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and the related 16 days of activism, including through activities led by information centres.

15. It similarly highlighted the International Day of Persons with Disabilities by producing multimedia products, including videos, blog posts and social media cards, that were shared through the Department's media outlets, the Goals website and social media platforms.

16. Supporting the Office of the Envoy of the Secretary-General on Youth, the Department helped to organize media opportunities around International Youth Day and supported the Office during the launches of the inaugural class of Young Leaders for the Sustainable Development Goals and the #NotTooYoungToRun campaign, organizing media interviews and social media opportunities.

17. The Department worked closely with the World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Organization for Animal Health to support media opportunities, including the development and dissemination of press materials, the organization of interviews and press conferences and logistical support, around the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on antimicrobial resistance. The Department also worked with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS to organize media outreach for World AIDS Day.

B. Climate change

18. Among the recent major achievements of the Organization, the Paris Agreement, adopted in 2015, continued to be a key focus of the Department's work. The Department highlighted across its multimedia platforms the high-level event towards the entry into force of the Agreement on 21 September, the event with representatives of civil society on the entry into force of the Agreement on

5 November and the Climate Change Conference held in Marrakech, Morocco, in November. In Marrakech, the Department coordinated the interviews given by the Secretary-General to global media. His statement on the Agreement was well echoed by major media outlets. The United Nations Information Centre in Rabat worked closely with the local organizers of the Conference and was part of the Department's team, together with its counterpart in Tunis, that created web and social media content and engaged with other information centres in the region.

19. Other information centres also focused attention on climate change. In Lagos, Nigeria, for example, jointly with a youth organization, the Centre organized a simulation of climate change negotiations. It intends to continue to use the simulation exercise as a way of creating awareness of the Paris Agreement and climate change issues among young people in Nigeria.

C. Human rights

20. The Department works closely with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and special rapporteurs to promote human rights. Equality and non-discrimination are also promoted as part of the sustainable development agenda.

21. In the context of the outreach programme on the Rwanda genocide, the Department organized two film screenings at Headquarters: that of *The Uncondemned*, on the landmark judgment issued by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda on rape as an act of genocide, in October, and that of *A Snake Gives Birth to a Snake*, on post-conflict reconciliation, on the International Day for Tolerance, in November. The annual observances of the International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of This Crime (9 December) and the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March 2017) also served and will serve, respectively, as opportunities to raise awareness of the dangers of racism and prejudice and the importance of the responsibility to protect.

22. The Department continued to contribute to commemorating special observances. It worked closely with OHCHR to promote the "Stand up for someone's rights today!" campaign, launched on Human Rights Day, through special events, the United Nations website and social media. It organized a film night on people of African descent on 8 December (see para. 23 below) and helped to promote a special event organized by OHCHR at Hunter College, New York, on 9 December. The Human Rights Day website maintained by the Department received almost 150,000 unique page views in the six official languages of the United Nations during the first half of December. On social media, the Department promoted a live Facebook session with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, which received more than 85,000 views, and launched an account on Medium, an online publishing platform developed by Twitter. Around the world, events and outreach activities to mark the Day were organized by information centres in many locations, including Beirut, Brazzaville, Brussels, Dakar, Dhaka,

Geneva, Harare, Islamabad, Jakarta, Lagos, Lusaka, New Delhi, Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), Tehran, Vienna and Yerevan.

23. For the International Decade for People of African Descent, the Department disseminated, in print and online, a booklet providing an overview of the Decade in the six official languages and Portuguese. It also produced a five-minute promotional video. A new documentary on descendants of slaves in Cuba will be produced early in 2017. Special events organized or supported by the Department included a film night at Headquarters on 8 December featuring short films by producers of African descent followed by a panel discussion, a youth video contest organized by the United Nations country team in Uruguay, a student workshop hosted by the United Nations Information Office in Yerevan and joint activities and a publication by the United Nations Information Centre in Lima, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the Ministry of Culture of Peru. A joint exhibit with the Department's Remember Slavery programme will be offered to information centres early in 2017.

24. The Department continued to disseminate information pertaining to dialogue among civilizations and the culture of peace and organized or supported special observances aimed at promoting messages of peace, human rights, respect for diversity, non-violence and tolerance. In addition to the above-mentioned international days and activities, the Department also promoted messages of social inclusion and equality on the International Day of Democracy (15 September), with a focus on building peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, and on International Migrants Day (18 December), aimed at highlighting the benefits of migration and changing negative attitudes towards migrants. The annual treaty event (19-23 September), devoted to the topic of human mobility, was promoted by the Department through press releases and daily updates to the media, highlighting the importance and benefits of multilateral cooperation for international peace.

D. Special information programme on the question of Palestine

25. As part of the General Assembly-mandated special information programme on the question of Palestine (see resolution 70/14), the Department organized its annual training programme for Palestinian journalists from 7 November to 8 December. Nine Palestinian media practitioners participated, bringing the total number of journalists benefiting from the training programme to 180. The first part of the programme included two weeks at Headquarters, where the journalists met the Secretary-General and senior officials and diplomats, and a week in Washington, D.C., where they met representatives of the Government of the United States of America and visited several major media organizations, think tanks and non-governmental organizations. The group then travelled to Doha for a hands-on two-week training course on television journalism and digital media, hosted by the Al Jazeera Media Training and Development Centre. This part of the training programme was made possible by a pro bono contribution by the Al Jazeera Media Network.

26. For the observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, the Department worked with the Department of Political Affairs to provide communications support for a special event held at Headquarters on 29 November. It included a special meeting of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable

Rights of the Palestinian People and the launch of an exhibit accompanied by a Palestinian dance performance. United Nations information centres and information offices in Addis Ababa, Ankara, Bogota, Brussels, Canberra (Australia), Dakar, Dar es Salaam (United Republic of Tanzania), Dhaka, Geneva, Moscow, Nairobi, New Delhi, Ouagadougou, Rabat, Prague, Pretoria, Tehran and Vienna also organized activities in commemoration of the Day.

E. Decolonization

27. The Department began work on the translation and production of the print version of the recently updated leaflet on what the United Nations can do to assist Non-Self-Governing Territories. It also promoted activities to mark the fifty-sixth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in December by means of print and electronic media, including its social media accounts and the network of information centres.

F. New Partnership for Africa's Development

28. As part of efforts coordinated by the United Nations to mobilize support for economic development, peace and security in Africa, the Department, working in close collaboration with the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, the Economic Commission for Africa and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Planning and Coordination Agency and its African Peer Review Mechanism, publicized and promoted African issues through its magazine *Africa Renewal/Afrique Renouveau* and Africa Renewal Online in both English and French. It also continued to promote the aims, priorities and achievements of the NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency.

29. In October, the Department organized media activities, including press interviews and a media briefing with senior United Nations officials, to support the annual Africa Week, held on the margins of the special debate of the General Assembly on Africa. Under the theme "Strengthening partnerships for inclusive sustainable development, good governance, peace and stability in Africa", the Department provided live tweets and regular updates on high-level events on its social media platforms. United Nations officials discussed issues pertaining to the renewed global partnership for entrenching good governance and the rule of law in Africa and the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want.

30. The Department also organized the annual media breakfast round table with the Chief Executive Officer of the NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency, in New York, on the theme "Derisking infrastructure investment in Africa", with the participation, for the first time, of representatives of the Continental Business Network, including some of the top business leaders in Africa. The media used the opportunity to engage with senior NEPAD officials and participants from the private sector on efforts to boost investment in Africa, especially in infrastructure. The Department developed a special web page on its website (www.un.org/africarenewal/) to Africa at the General Assembly, which was populated with regular updates,

including the official speeches, statements and activities of African leaders during the general debate.

31. The Department provided the African Union with technical and editorial assistance in the production and publication of its newsletter, the 2016 edition of which was focused on women's rights and human rights. The syndicated news features service of *Africa Renewal/Afrique Renouveau* continued to expand in 2016. Between August and December, 26 of the magazine's articles were republished in both English and French 238 times in more than 50 media outlets in Africa and worldwide.

32. To respond to increasing reader interest in stories on Africa that are usually not covered by the mainstream media, the August-November issue of *Africa Renewal/ Afrique Renouveau* was focused on the growth of African democracy, featuring stories on the launch of a pan-African passport, elections, India-Africa relations, green industrialization, gender, the role of civil society in a democracy and climate change. Rethinking the continent's health-care systems was the theme for the December 2016-March 2017 issue, and topics included gains made in efforts to combat malaria and HIV/AIDS, mental illness, the medical brain drain, health insurance and the burden of lifestyle diseases. The edition also covered the global commodity price crash and its impact on African economies, the plight of African migrants in search of better lives in Europe and Moroccan investment in sub-Saharan Africa. The Department will participate in the eighteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa, to be held in Dakar in March 2017, on implementing Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Mechanism's advocacy and communications cluster, of which the Department is a member, has adopted a communications plan of action covering the period 2016-2017.

33. The Department collaborated with Chinese universities to launch the first online edition of *Africa Renewal* in Chinese. In collaboration with the Office of the Special Envoy on Youth, the Department produced a special edition on young people, examining unemployment, education, reproductive health, migration, gender and political participation.

34. To increase the readership of the magazine, the Department added more dissemination platforms, including iTunes, Zinio and PressReader, and began to produce podcasts and brief videos on the magazine's website. Social media accounts showed significant growth. For example, between 1 August and 20 December, the number of followers on the magazine's Twitter accounts rose by 13 per cent for the French-language account and 10 per cent for the English-language account (see table).

Increased social media attention on *Africa Renewal/Afrique Renouveau*

Platform	*December 2015*	*December 2016*	*Increase (percentage)*
Twitter (number of followers):			
@africarenewal	81 800	89 712	10
@ONUAfrique	49 300	56 537	15
Facebook (number of likes):			
Africa Renewal	6 145	8 021	31
Afrique Renouveau	2 802	3 262	16

G. United Nations peace operations

35. In support of the United Nations flagship activity, peace support operations, the Department collaborated closely with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support and the Department of Political Affairs to strengthen communications outreach on the key peace and security challenges before the Organization.

36. The Department worked with partners at Headquarters and in the region to promote improved understanding of United Nations political efforts and the humanitarian response in the Syrian Arab Republic and neighbouring countries, participating in regular meetings of the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Syrian Crisis led by the Department of Political Affairs and the weekly videoconferences chaired by that Department. The Department also directly supported the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria by deploying a staff member to its communications office. The Department issued a weekly public information product, entitled "Syrian crisis: United Nations response", to provide a snapshot of the latest United Nations activities to address the crisis.

37. As diplomatic efforts by the Special Envoy continued with a view to bringing about a cessation of hostilities in Yemen, the Department covered his activities on its platforms. The activities of the United Nations system in support of peace efforts were compiled on a dedicated page on the United Nations News Centre site. The Department also participated in the strategic planning process for a possible strengthened United Nations presence in Yemen were a peace agreement to be signed.

38. The Department participated in the crisis management team meetings on South Sudan led by the United Nations Operations and Crisis Centre and supported communications by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations following the violence that broke out in July. As a core member of the planning team for the United Nations Mission in Colombia, it supported strategic communications efforts as a peace agreement was reached, modified and eventually ratified, including the onboarding and mentoring of public information staff for the Mission and the maintenance of the Mission's website in English and Spanish. It developed a strategic communications induction training module for all Mission personnel and a tailored media handling module for Mission leadership.

39. The Department provided strategic communications advice to the Office of the Special Coordinator on Improving the United Nations Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and helped to design "no excuse" cards that will be distributed to peacekeepers. It monitored the implementation of the communications strategy that it developed on sexual exploitation and abuse directly with peacekeeping missions through regular web-based sessions and advocated a more proactive communications stance, encouraging senior United Nations leaders to speak out on sexual exploitation and abuse issues more frequently.

40. The Department established an inter-agency communications group to support communications engagement and ensure the coherence of key messages with regard to the joint military operations to retake Mosul, Iraq, from Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, which began in October. It also participated in the biweekly crisis management team meetings on Iraq.

41. Following the adoption, in April, by the General Assembly and the Security Council of landmark resolutions on the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture (70/262 and 2282 (2016), respectively), the Department supported the efforts of the Peacebuilding Support Office to raise awareness of the new sustaining peace agenda. The Department provided communications support and coverage on its traditional and social media channels of the Peacebuilding Fund pledging conference held in September.

42. In close collaboration with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department co-managed the peacekeeping website (www.un.org/peacekeeping) in the six official languages. The joint web editorial board met regularly to cover issues relating to the maintenance and development of the website, aimed at improving the quality of visual and content presentation, and enhanced use of social media platforms. The Board is developing a new web platform for field missions, on which 26 missions are already live.

43. The Department delivered a digital communications training course for regional missions in the Middle East, including the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon, the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force and the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization. It finalized a draft of a policy on strategic communications and public information for peacekeeping operations after extensive consultations with public information staff from field missions. It will develop a modified version of the policy for special political missions.

44. The Department continues to use the media outreach and social media capacities of the global network of information centres to amplify messages from peacekeeping operations and Headquarters to promote the contributions and sacrifices of individual troop- and police-contributing countries to their local audiences in their local languages. Such efforts were conducted on 39 occasions, targeting 21 Member States.

H. Counter-terrorism

45. To foster better public understanding of the work of the multiple United Nations counter-terrorism bodies, the Department continued to update the website on United Nations action to counter terrorism. To enhance coherence and coordination on strategic communications relating to preventing violent extremism, a new working group on strategic communications, co-chaired by the Department, was established in late 2016. The Department also participated in a project aimed at training and building the capacity of the media and establishing a communications strategy for victims of terrorism to amplify their voices.

I. Disarmament

46. The Department assisted in updating the websites for the International Day against Nuclear Tests and the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

J. Zika virus

47. The Department worked closely with the World Health Organization and provided strategic communications support for the United Nations system response to the Zika virus and its associated complications. It chaired the regular system-wide communications calls on health crises and outbreaks to ensure that the system was speaking with a consistent voice on the subject, which was particularly important in November when the public health emergency of international concern was ended.

K. Addressing large movements of refugees and migrants

48. In preparation for the high-level plenary meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants, held on 19 September, the Department established and co-chaired an inter-agency communications group to develop and implement a strategy and produce system-wide key messages. It also coordinated press conferences, background briefings and interviews with key United Nations officials and produced communications products and a website in the six official languages. The information centres provided global outreach in the run-up to the campaign. The Department produced a media monitoring and analysis report on communications outreach for the meeting.

49. As one of the key outcomes of the meeting, the Department led the conception of the campaign entitled "Together — respect, safety and dignity for all", a global campaign to change negative perceptions and attitudes towards refugees and migrants and strengthen the social contract between host countries and communities and refugees and migrants. The Department developed branding, a website and digital content in the six official languages and is establishing a wide range of partnerships with international institutions, civil society and the private sector. It has coordinated a global series of events through its field offices to disseminate the message and seek action at the community and national levels.

50. For example, in the lead-up to the meeting, the United Nations Regional Information Centre for Western Europe, located in Brussels, in partnership with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration, organized a pop-up street art campaign in Belgian cities aimed at raising awareness of the plight of refugees and migrants, with a clear message to Governments to take immediate action. The United Nations Information Centre in Rio de Janeiro produced a documentary on refugees and migrants who came to Brazil for a new life and highlighted the challenges of the refugee and Paralympic teams who participated in the Olympic Games held in Rio de Janeiro in 2016. The video was recorded in Portuguese with English subtitles.

51. A number of information centres and services, including those in Dhaka, Geneva, Pretoria and Washington, D.C., supported the International Organization for Migration with regard to the Global Migration Film Festival in December, co-branded under the campaign entitled "Together — respect, safety and dignity for all".

Media monitoring and analysis of the communications outreach for the high-level plenary meeting

52. The purpose of the media analysis was to assess the worldwide media coverage of the issue of refugees and migrants around the time of the high-level plenary meeting. The analysis was intended to determine the ability of the Department to raise media awareness of the meeting, based on the reach and effectiveness of its communications activities. The Department's Evaluation and Communications Research Unit, with support from the information centres, monitored the visibility and level of favourability of press coverage both towards the Organization and the issues raised at the meeting, as well as coverage of key United Nations communications messages and spokespeople in the global media. The analysis was based on industry standard methodologies and drew on the Department's unique breadth of language and local media knowledge from the information centres. The key findings were as follows:

(a) Major intergovernmental events such as summit meetings remain strong drivers for traditional media coverage worldwide;

(b) Media outreach efforts pay-off: targeted outreach combined with the broad distribution of high-quality materials influences tonality. The exclusive press briefing organized by the Department to wire services and the wide distribution of press releases, together with regular press briefings, media appearances and materials for social media, were all worthwhile investments and helped to shape the tone of the coverage;

(c) Messaging is critical: clear, succinct and non-prescriptive key messages generate coverage and influence tonality. The pickup of key United Nations messages was strong, with 48 per cent of the media carrying at least one key message. The most popular message, including in Europe, where pickup was lower, was that the challenge of addressing large movements of refugees and migrants is not insurmountable, if we approach international cooperation in a spirit of shared responsibility;

(d) Branding matters: the name given to the event brought visibility to both the Organization's commitment to the issue and the words "refugees" and "migrants";

(e) Location and timing have an impact on the visibility of the United Nations in relation to a certain event and/or issue: the visibility of the Organization in the media coverage was high, in line with previous analyses of summit meetings held at the time of the opening of the session of the General Assembly.

L. Social media

53. With social media a key communications tool for the United Nations in the digital era, the Department interacted with social media followers and provided behind-the-scenes images of the work of the Organization across the major global platforms, including Facebook, Flickr, Google+, Instagram, Snapchat, Tumblr, Twitter, VK, WeChat, Weibo and YouTube. United Nations messages are seen on social media by more than 16 million people each day. The Department is finalizing a Secretariat-wide process to draft policies on the use of social media and has

disseminated guidance documents, organized informational events on social media topics and themes and played a leading role in the coordination of social media initiatives for the United Nations system.

54. The number of followers of the Organization's Twitter account in English has increased steadily and currently stands at more than 8 million. Some of the most viewed topics were the Sustainable Development Goals, including action on the Paris Agreement; the Organization's responses to the global migrant and refugee situations; the crises in the Central African Republic, Haiti, Mali, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen; and the question of Palestine. Similar results were seen on the English-language Facebook and Google+ accounts, which together have more than 8 million fans. The Department continues to see impressive growth on its Instagram account, which is expected to surpass the 1 million follower mark in 2017.

55. During the high-level week of the General Assembly, the Department worked with the United Nations Children's Fund and social media platform representatives from Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter and Weibo to create a dedicated social media space for world leaders and high-level participants to create special "digital-only" multilingual content, which was highly popular with fans and followers online. Building on lessons learned in September, a similar space was created at the Climate Change Conference held in Marrakech.

III. Information centre services

A. Multilingualism

56. The global network of information centres communicates with local audiences in their languages for greater impact and reach. The centres published information materials in 66 languages[1] and prepared, recirculated and often translated press releases and summaries thereof, fact sheets and other information materials and content emanating from Headquarters or the United Nations system locally. They produce newsletters in 15 languages, on a weekly, monthly, bimonthly or quarterly basis.

57. The information centres have translated the Sustainable Development Goals, including the icons, into 50 languages. In an innovative effort, the Information Centre in Accra partnered with Ghana Braille Press, of the Ministry of Education, to produce the Goals in Ghanaian Braille.

58. Of the 59 information centre websites, 31 use local languages. A total of 54 centres have Facebook accounts, of which 16 are in local languages, while 53 have Twitter accounts in 22 local languages and 39 have YouTube in 8 local languages. The centres also used other social media platforms such as Aparat, Flickr, Flipboard,

[1] Afrikaans, Akuapem Twi, Armenian, Asante Twi, Bahasa Indonesia, Bangla, Belarusian, Bemba, Czech, Dagaare, Dagbani, Dangme, Danish, Dutch, Ewe, Fante, Filipino, Finnish, Fulfulde (Burkina Faso), Fulfulde (Cameroon), Ga, Georgian, German, Gonja, Greek, Gulmacema, Hausa, Hiligaynon, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Italian, Japanese, Kazakh, Kiswahili, Malagasy, Ndebele, Norwegian, Nyanja/Chinyanja, Nzima, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Quechua, Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, Shona, Sinhala, Siswati, Slovak, Slovene, Swedish, Turkish, Tamil, Telugu, Twi, Ukrainian, Urdu, Uzbek, Venda, Wolof, Xhosa, Xitsonga, Yoruba and Zulu.

Google+, Instagram, LinkedIn, Livestream, Periscope, Pinterest, SlideShare, Snapchat, Telegram, Tumblr, Vimeo, Vine and VK.

59. Some information centres also produced their own radio and television programmes, while others distributed United Nations Television/Radio productions, which were broadcast in a variety of languages.

60. As part of its activities to promote multilingualism, the United Nations Information Centre in Moscow convened, in November, the seventh annual translation workshop for representatives of universities that are parties to the memorandum of understanding with the Secretariat on cooperation in the field of training Russian translators and interpreters for future work in international organizations.

B. Strengthening outreach activities to Member States outside the United Nations information centre network

61. The Department's membership of the Working Group on Communications and Advocacy, part of the United Nations Development Group, has allowed United Nations country teams in countries that are not serviced by an information centre to take full advantage of the communication guidance and support that the Department makes available to the centres.

62. The Department, through the United Nations Information Office in Almaty, collaborated closely with the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia in Ashgabat on joint efforts, including the promotion of the Sustainable Development Goals, the United Nations Academic Impact, model United Nations, issues relating to counter-terrorism and extremism, nuclear non-proliferation and building the capacities of young people and journalists in Turkmenistan. The United Nations Information Centre in Rio de Janeiro and the United Nations Regional Information Centre for Western Europe, located in Brussels, regularly collaborate with the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau, especially on content in Portuguese.

C. International observance days

63. International observance days have helped information centres to collaborate and strengthen partnerships with a wide variety of partners. For the International Day of Peace (21 September), the United Nations Information Centres in Pretoria and Windhoek collaborated on the #PeacePals project, encouraging high school students to write to one another about peace and the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically Goal 16.

64. To mark the beginning of the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence, in November, the United Nations Information Centre in Nairobi, in collaboration with UN-Women, the United Nations Population Fund and the Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs, organized a campaign against female genital mutilation in northern Kenya.

65. The United Nations Information Service in Geneva, in collaboration with OHCHR, organized a live Facebook session with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on Human Rights Day. The video had close to 90,000 views and more than 9,000 reactions, comments and shares. In the run-up to the Day, the United Nations Information Centre in Islamabad and the High Commission of Canada to Pakistan organized a panel discussion to raise awareness of transgender, health and human rights.

D. Strengthening United Nations information centres through strategic support and by enhancing capacities and building synergies

66. To maximize impact and address resource constraints, the Department is creating stronger synergies among the information centres, relying on the larger centres to further support information offices in their regions. It also uses all available means to maintain regular interaction through e-mail, teleconferences, online meetings, in-person visits and training and workshops.

67. In partnership with the United Nations Foundation, the Department organized a workshop in November to strengthen the capacity of the information centres to promote the Sustainable Development Goals. Nineteen directors met at Headquarters to discuss how they could enhance public understanding of the Goals and the broader work of the Organization. As part of the project, national information staff from nine French-speaking African centres met for a workshop at the United Nations Information Centre in Dakar in December. They shared experiences, needs, challenges and opportunities with experts from the region, and from Headquarters and peacekeeping offices online. The workshop strengthened synergies among the centres in the region and around the French language with the Department's French-language teams located at Headquarters and in Geneva and Brussels.

68. Building on the positive results achieved in 2015, the Department invited four information centre staff members to assist its social media team during the high-level events in September and provided training and hands-on experience.

69. The Department continued to use online meetings to interact with information centres on programme issues and administrative and finance topics, as well as for training. In 2016, 92 live briefings (40 programmatic, 31 administrative and 21 training/other) were held, reaching more than 1,000 participants, including journalists and members of the United Nations country teams and communications groups. Recent sessions included orientation programmes for new staff, training on photography for effective communications, media monitoring for the high-level plenary meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants and the Leadership Dialogue.

E. Working with United Nations country teams and system entities

70. Information centres continue to be central to the communications work of United Nations country teams, guided by the concept of communicating as one. They often take the lead in developing strategies for the joint commemoration of

international days, launches of reports, engagement with a wide and diverse local audience and the promotion of the specific activities of country team members in the country and visits of senior United Nations officials.

71. The offices located in Brussels, Geneva, Nairobi and Vienna provide strategic communications and public information support to agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system and lead system communications in multiple ways. Those in Geneva, Nairobi and Vienna manage visitor services, provide guided tours, arrange briefings for visiting groups, manage outside speaking arrangements, handle media accreditation for United Nations conferences and press conferences and lead local communications groups.

72. The United Nations Regional Information Centre for Western Europe, which is located in Brussels and serves 22 Western European countries in 13 languages, partnered with intergovernmental bodies based in Brussels, including entities of the European Union, to highlight United Nations issues. For example, on United Nations Day, it, with the United Nations system in Belgium, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the United Nations Association, worked together on educational outreach on the work of the United Nations and the Sustainable Development Goals and, during the week of events surrounding the Day, an exhibit to promote a campaign for action to attain the Goals in the European Parliament.

73. The United Nations Information Service in Geneva provides television, radio, webcast, multimedia, press and visitor services to the United Nations Office at Geneva. Since September, it has supported the organization of 93 press conferences and chaired 38 biweekly press briefings, including on major United Nations-brokered political talks, such as on Cyprus and the Syrian Arab Republic. It launched a project to create multimedia content on the work undertaken by the United Nations and its partners in Geneva to support the global development agenda.

74. The United Nations Information Service in Vienna raised awareness about the work of the United Nations in Austria, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia. In Hungary, for example, it coordinated activities on the Goals and the "Together — respect, safety and dignity for all" campaign with the growing number of United Nations offices in Budapest. In Austria, it coordinated activities such as a joint United Nations presence at the largest Austrian careers fair and at the open-house day of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It leads the communications group and launched a common web portal in English and German for the United Nations family in Vienna that provides a comprehensive overview of the work of the United Nations system in Vienna and how it contributes to sustainable development and peace. It has worked closely with the UNHCR office in Austria and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime on promoting the "Together — respect, safety and dignity for all" campaign, including a visit in December by the Secretary-General to a restaurant in Vienna run by Austrians and Syrian refugees.

75. Information centres worked with United Nations system entities in many other ways. For example:

(a) The Information Centre in Ankara organized press conferences for the visits in November of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the

right to freedom of opinion and expression and the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;

(b) The Information Centre in Cairo mobilized the media for the first high-level ministerial conference on women and achieving peace and security in the Arab region, held in September, organized by UN-Women and the League of Arab States;

(c) The Information Centre in Lagos provided communication support for a symposium in October on the United Nations and the Sustainable Development Goals organized by the United Nations system and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;

(d) The Information Centre in Manama supported the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the organization of the seventh Annual Conference for Effective Partnership and Information Sharing for Better Humanitarian Action, held for the first time in Bahrain, on 31 October and 1 November;

(e) The Information Centre in Nairobi supported the United Nations Development Assistance Framework "Delivering as one" exhibition in November and provided photographic coverage used widely by the traditional media and shared with the public on various online platforms;

(f) The Information Centre in Port of Spain created an exhibit on the Goals that was launched on United Nations Day by the United Nations country team in Trinidad and Tobago, in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs;

(g) In support of UN-Women, the Information Centre in Rio de Janeiro produced a video in October to mark the International Day of the Girl Child, featuring a handball player and UN-Women programme participant, Raphaela Lacerda, discussing how sport had helped her and her team to overcome barriers;

(h) The Information Centre in Tunis provided guidance and assistance to the International Fund for Agricultural Development in the organization of the launch in December in Tunisia of the *Rural Development Report 2016: Fostering Inclusive Rural Transformation*;

(i) The Information Centre in Washington, D.C., provided strategic advice to visiting United Nations officials on media outreach. It also organized and brought together the United Nations system in the city at a presentation on peacekeeping, refugees, climate change and sustainable development to one of the largest African American church groups in the country (more than 2 million members) in October.

F. Partnerships

76. The information centres have forged a range of partnerships to build support for and understanding and a sense of ownership of the ideals and work of the United Nations. In addition to traditional partners, such as Governments, non-governmental organizations, the media, educational institutions and the academic community, the centres are increasingly engaging with the creative community, cultural institutions, sports associations, faith-based groups and the private sector to raise awareness of key United Nations issues for greater results and impact.

77. Using their well-established partnerships with the media and their mobilizing power, information centres placed the appeal for peace issued by the Secretary-General on 1 January in a record 400 print, television, radio, online, social media and multimedia outlets in close to 40 countries. The appeal was issued in eight languages (the six official languages, Kiswahili and Portuguese) by Headquarters and translated into many local languages by centres.

78. The Director of the United Nations Information Centre in Buenos Aires was a keynote speaker during the Sustainable Brands Buenos Aires conference, held in September, which was focused on global forward-thinking business and brand strategies, marketing, innovation and sustainability professionals. Her presentation on the Sustainable Development Goals and the private sector to more than 1,000 people was widely echoed on social media.

79. The United Nations Information Centre in Beirut established partnerships with several media houses in Jordan and Lebanon to promote the Goals. In Jordan, for one year, the Ru'ya television channel will incorporate the Goals into all its networks and produce television spots, infomercials, intermission fillers and reports on them. The other agreements were with Petra, a Jordanian news agency, and State-run Jordanian television and radio stations, as well as with the *Al-Ra'iy* and *Jordan Times* newspapers. In Lebanon, the centre forged a one-year partnership with one of the country's most-read daily newspapers, *Al-Diyar*, to publish features on the Goals.

80. The United Nations Information Centre in Islamabad, in partnership with Agence France Presse, the European Union, the Embassy of France to Pakistan and the United Kingdom Department for International Development, organized a photo exhibition on the Goals in Pakistan to mark United Nations Day. The exhibition travelled to Lahore and Karachi.

81. To publicize the Goals, the United Nations Information Centre in Jakarta and the United Nations Communications Group in Indonesia partnered with Radio Elshinta and the *Arena 123* programme. In cooperation with one of the most popular social media networks in the country, Path, the Centre promoted the launch of the United Nations Environment Programme Wild for Life campaign in October. More than 3 million viewers clicked on the icon and photomorph application on the first day alone. The application was created in Bahasa Indonesia and Vietnamese. The digital campaign reached in excess of 3.2 million Path users in a week.

82. The United Nations Information Centre in Lagos engaged with Goodware Stitches to train 1 million young people and women on handling waste recycling equipment and machinery, jointly with the state authorities. The first training session is planned for the first quarter of 2017.

83. The United Nations Information Centre in Manila partnered with SM Prime Holdings and SM Mall of Asia in the launch of an exhibition on the Goals for United Nations Day. The exhibition included life-size cut-out photographs of 17 celebrities with the Goals icons and general information.

84. The United Nations Information Centre in Pretoria and the South African Institute of International Affairs hosted a Twitter party in Soweto, Johannesburg, on United Nations Day, with students from around the country engaging in an

interactive session with the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information. Some students were part of the model United Nations teams.

85. Museon, the science and culture museum in The Hague, Netherlands, inaugurated in October, is host to a new permanent exhibition, "One Planet", through a partnership between Museon, the municipality and the United Nations Regional Information Centre for Western Europe, located in Brussels. The exhibition consists of 17 interactive areas on the Goals in Dutch and English.

86. The United Nations Information Centre in Tokyo organized several activities to highlight the sixtieth anniversary of the Japanese membership of the United Nations, including lectures at universities, interviews with Japanese United Nations staff and a public service announcement, shown twice an hour every day during the year on giant screens in the busiest Tokyo neighbourhoods of Yurakucho, Shibuya and Harajuku.

87. The United Nations Information Centre in Tunis produced a book, *Tunisia and the United Nations: 60 Years in 60 Photos*, which was launched together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to mark the country's accession to the Organization.

88. The United Nations Information Centre in Washington, D.C., expanded its outreach to museums, including the National Museum of African American History and Culture, the Newseum, the Smithsonian and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. It established a partnership with the National Academy of Sciences and the Association of Science-Technology Centers that co-hosted on 10 November an event in the Academy's Science Museum to highlight citizen science, climate change and technology and marked the first international day designated to draw attention to the work of science centres and museums worldwide. The Centre is working to highlight Goal messaging through a permanent exhibit within the Museum and a travelling exhibit for the city's school system.

89. It also supported UNHCR and the Newseum to launch the Annenberg Space for Photography exhibit, *Refugee*, in November. It and the Newseum will cooperate on a series of programmes, planned to begin early in 2017.

G. Outreach to young people

90. Building on partnerships forged with and to reach more young people, information centres have cooperated with educational institutions and youth groups on initiatives such as United Nations careers days, job fairs and on-the-job training programmes. Most centres offer internship or mentorship programmes.

91. The UN4U outreach programme continues to be an effective way to tell the Organization's story, reaching more than 100,000 students around United Nations Day and the related week. Some centres have regular briefings conducted at their premises and at educational institutions, targeting students and youth groups. In 2016, 46 centres briefed more than 180,000 young people and students at all levels in 38 languages, 5 of which were official languages of the United Nations.

92. The survey carried out for briefing participants in 2016, which measures the target audiences' understanding of the United Nations at the local level, showed that on average 90 per cent of respondents — most of them young people — indicated

an improved understanding. There were 3,200 responses, collected by 45 information centres.

93. Model United Nations programmes remain effective in engaging with young people on issues of global concern. More than 20 centres have organized model United Nations conferences worldwide, with some 12,000 students participating in 2016. The centres also provided training, lectures and support to organizers and information materials to participating students, as well as serving as adjudicators at the debates.

IV. Conclusion

94. The Department develops, leads and implements communications campaigns on the priority issues identified by Member States and the Secretary-General. The two key campaigns for the period ahead are entitled "Sustainable Development Goals: 17 Goals to transform our world" and "Together — respect, safety and dignity for all". The Department uses social media and traditional communications tools to reach a broad audience, adapted and amplified by its global network of information centres.

95. The Department will expand its leadership of crisis communications, according priority to the key peace and security challenges on the Organization's agenda, including a strong focus on refugees and migrants. Through its leadership of inter-agency task forces, the Department will ensure communications coordination on emerging crises and priority issues.

96. The Department will continue to explore new tools, channels and strategic partnerships to promote the Sustainable Development Goals and other key United Nations initiatives and messages. Through the United Nations Communications Group, the Department will ensure coordination, collaboration and cohesiveness of messaging among the entities of the United Nations system.

97. The Department will also work to broaden and enhance the role of the information centres on issues in their respective regions and in local languages. Through the increased use of web-based briefings, the Department will seek to provide stronger coordination and sharing of information on key events and priority issues with field offices. This will include briefings by senior officials to United Nations country teams and the international media. The Department will also ensure that communications and administrative processes are effectively managed between Headquarters and field offices.